

# Child and Family Services Update

Thursday, April 25, 2002

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## Personal Responsibility

*By Richard Anderson*

I hope the title of this Update doesn't bring back tinges of adolescent rebellion. I am sending this to all of you, with my compliments, as daily I see such great examples where you are building a better personal and professional place for yourselves, your associates, and for the children and families we serve. Personal responsibility may be where it all starts and ends.

I came across a list of questions that I originally picked up many years ago. Once in a while, I come across this list in my files, and ask myself these questions. I've decided the emphasis is on whether I view myself as just a bureaucrat, who is going with the flow, or if I am attempting to make a positive difference. I'd like to share my test with you:

1. Do I view myself as self-employed?
2. After my last performance evaluation, did I set some personal goals to improve my performance?
3. How satisfying is my present job assignment? Do I accept responsibility for the frustrations I am experiencing?
4. What am I doing to upgrade my education?
5. What am I doing to upgrade my marketability?
6. Do I see myself as in control of my career, or is "the state" in control?
7. Am I hoping that someone else (the state, my supervisor, the director, etc.) will assure that I have a satisfying and successful career? Do I really believe they will?
8. Do I think of (and talk about) the agency as "mine" or do I see it as belonging to someone else?

The list is very "me" focused, but it also builds toward making more valuable contributions to others. The only other question that I add is, "What am I doing to help others succeed?" These questions can have meaning no matter where we are in our careers. I hope that your experience with us will bring many years full of contributions that you will always be grateful for having given and having received. I am committed to your personal success. Knowing you as I do, I know that your success leads to success for children and families. Now, if this did hook those adolescent rebellion feelings, please know it did the same for me, at first.

# Child Abuse Prevention Month

*By Reba Nissen*

On April 23, Governor Leavitt signed a proclamation declaring April to be Child Abuse Prevention Month in Utah. President George W. Bush signed a proclamation on April 1 declaring April to be National Child Abuse Prevention Month (see the proclamation at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/04/20020401-10.html>).

Additionally, information and materials are available from the National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information at <http://www.calib.com/nccanch/prevmnth/index.cfm>.

More than ever, this month there are activities and opportunities at the community, state, and national level to raise awareness about child abuse and to celebrate the community resources and supports that work to prevent it.

Two activities are the Third Annual Parents Anonymous Conference, held at the Midvale Boys and Girls Club on April 19 from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. for English-speaking families, and the Third Annual Celebration of El Dia Del Ninos (Day of the Children) also at the Midvale Boys and Girls Club on April 27 from 4:00 to 8:30 p.m. for Spanish-speaking families. Both include dinner, are free of charge, and will have activities and workshops for parents and their children. For more information and registration, contact Bonnie at the Midvale Boys and Girls Club at 256-9008.

Also cause for celebration is the new Family Support Center in Bountiful. A wonderful addition to the eleven Family Support Centers statewide, the Bountiful Family Connections Center provides crisis respite care, parent and family resources, and supports. Visit your local Family Support Center and say thanks for all the work they do to prevent child abuse.

More reasons to celebrate are the successes in your work with children and families. You work every day to prevent the occurrence and recurrence of child abuse and neglect, and you are successful. Make time and find ways to celebrate those successes with families, with your co-workers, and with your own family.

Celebrate Child Abuse Prevention Month!

## Foster Parents Embrace Practice Model

*By Midge Delavan*

Many thanks to foster parents, family resource consultants, training managers, and Utah Foster Care Foundation trainers who met for three days in April to train on the Practice Model Foster Parent Training Module: Strengthening the Partnership. Foster parents were excited and insightful as they discussed, practiced, and experienced the Practice Model. Foster parents brought a level of appreciation for their own work and for the needs of children and families that was inspiring for all the participants and for the trainers from the Child Welfare Policy and Practice Group (CWPPG)--Linda Bayless and Cornelius Bird.

Each region will have a training team to provide in-service Practice Model training for all foster parents:

- The Eastern Region team is Les Harris, Karen Sutterind, Lori Sumner, JaCina Barrett, and Melissa Harris.
- The Southwest Region team includes Mick Woolsey, John Larsen, Valerie Beal, Lillie Ames, and Rick Clements.
- The Northern Region team includes Brian Young, Maxine Maloney, Verdene Stephens, Cindy Gates, Alice Garceau, and Sherrin Weiss.
- The Western Region team includes Elsebeth Green, Marcy Swan, Joy Brough, Terri Rowley, Karen Hill, Keena Gallop, and Judy Miller.
- The Salt Lake Valley Region team includes Katrina Harris, Susan Bryan, Kit Hansen, Michaela Sanders, Cliff Farnsworth, Lisa Valdez, and Jackie Webb.

Cindy Gates, Utah Foster-Adoptive Family Association President and Kelly Peterson, Training Director for the Utah Foster Care Foundation made the training possible through their support and interest. The foster parents were the best possible partners in sharing their knowledge and desiring to support work with children and families. Child and Family Services staff shared and supported the training. Thank you RFC's, RTM's, and NET's. It was a great example of the Partnership principle at work. Good Job!

## Nutshell Child And Family Teams

*By Richard Anderson*

I wanted to pass along a few ideas on things that need to be in the room during a child and family team meeting--besides the people. Here are some: common goals, leadership, interaction and involvement of all members, maintenance of individual self-esteem, open communication, power within the group to make decisions, attention to process and content, mutual trust, respect for differences, and constructive conflict resolution (among others).

The child and family team symbolizes the most honest and humane way to address life's problems. Once we have shown a family this way of dealing with their struggles, let's encourage them to continue to create their own form of this support after we have formally exited their lives.

## Domestic Violence Collaboration Project Web Site

*By Carol Miller*

Through a grant offered by the Office of Justice Programs (OJP), U.S. Department of Justice, the OJP Collaboration Project has been funded. This is an exciting project with great potential for helping the families and children we serve. Please visit their web site at <http://www.ojpcollaborationproject.org> for valuable information about the vision, mission, initiatives, etc. of the OJP Collaboration Project.

# Participation In Study On Workforce

By Richard Anderson

At the Western Steering Committee of the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) last year, I was fortunate to be given the opportunity to participate in early discussions around workforce and retention. CWLA has been responsive to our request to make this a national agenda, and I would like to share with you the following email message that I received from them:

**From:** "S. Bilchik" <exec-dir@cwla.org>  
**To:** <rjanders@hs.state.ut.us>  
**Date:** 4/11/02 12:51PM  
**Subject:** Participation in GAO Study on Workforce

Dear Colleagues:

*Our member agencies continue to cite workforce recruitment and retention as among the most pressing issues they confront. One aspect of CWLA's Workforce Development Initiative, has included engaging the public and elected officials to address the child welfare workforce crisis.*

*As part of our efforts to secure additional federal support, we worked closely with Representative Pete Stark (D-CA) to develop legislation (H.R. 1371) that would provide new federal resources to state child welfare systems to improve the quality of services by increasing the quality and capacity of the workforce. The bill also provides loan forgiveness to certain students who become child welfare workers. As a part of this effort, Representative Stark directed the General Accounting Office (GAO) to prepare a study of (1) the scope of the workforce crisis, (2) the impact it has on child safety and permanence, and (3) what would be necessary to resolve the problem.*

*The GAO has already begun to collect information for the study. We have provided them with background materials on the child welfare workforce. The GAO would like to hear directly from the field and will be soon selecting a sample of CWLA member agencies to contact via facsimile. Though we do not usually share members' contact information it seemed that the benefits of providing you the opportunity to weigh in on this critical issue justified an exception - so in this instance we have provided them with our membership list for one time use. We have been assured that agency specific data will be kept confidential. I am encouraged that the voice of our membership is being included in this report and ask you to share your expertise if you are contacted.*

*If you have additional questions regarding our efforts to support the GAO study or would like additional information on the CWLA's Workforce Development Initiative, please contact Barbara Schmitt, CWLA's Director of Workforce Development, at [Bschmitt@cwla.org](mailto:Bschmitt@cwla.org) or 202/942-0246.*

*Shay*